

North Carolina Wheel of Fortune Cancellations



by Larry Rausch

This article details those towns using the Wheel of Fortune postmark that I have identified for the state of North Carolina with illustrations of several of the North Carolina postmarks.

In 1880, the F.P. Hammond Co. of Aurora, Illinois, introduced the cancel/killer shown enlarged in Figure 1. Today this fancy rubber cancel is called the Wheel of Fortune cancel. The highly detailed stamper was made possible with the inven-



◀ **Figure 1.** The Wheel of Fortune canceller, often found duplexed with a town datestamp.

tion of vulcanized rubber. The Peerless Vulcanizer shown on the 1898 cover (see Figure 2) may have been the type of machine to make the Wheel of Fortune device.

The first advertisement for the Wheel of Fortune cancel appeared in the January 1881 *U.S. Official Postal Guide* illustrated in Figure 3. Although this ad depicts postmarks dating in the 1870s, the earliest Wheel of Fortune postmark found to date is

February 26, 1880, from New Lisbon, Wisconsin. The earliest from North Carolina is dated February 20, 1885, from Belvidere (Perquimans County) (see Figure 4). Note: In the advertisement under "The Best Offer Yet," this canceller and kit cost \$3.00!

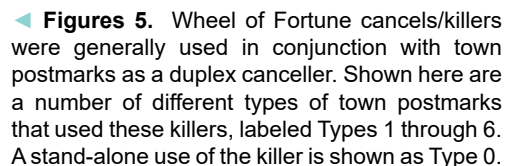
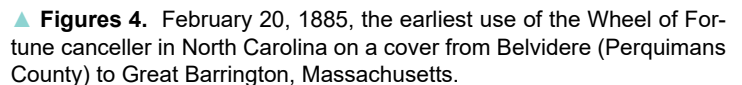
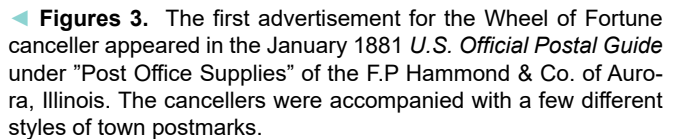
Wheel of Fortune cancels were generally used in conjunction with town postmarks as a duplex canceller. A few different Types labeled 1 through 6 are illustrated in Figure 5. Additionally, the Wheel of Fortune canceler is known used stand-alone, which I have identified as Type 0. An example of the stand-alone is shown in the Heilig's Mill, North Carolina cover (see Figure 6).

The 1995 book *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894* by James M. Cole listed a total of 353 United States towns using the Wheel of Fortune cancel; for North Carolina he listed four towns. The 2011 Kelleher Auction of the Arthur Beane sale had six North Carolina Wheel of Fortune covers listed. To date, ten different North Carolina towns have been identified (see Table 1 on page 18). In this table the column that shows "A" and "B" indicates two different cancel styles are known. The column that has a "P" indicates that I have a photo of the cancellation. Some of these Wheel of Fortune postmarked covers follow this article.

In the November 2005 *U.S. Cancellation Club News* issue, Arthur Beane announced a project to produce a monograph on



▲ **Figure 2.** April 2, 1898, illustrated advertising cover of the J.F.W. Dorman Company in Baltimore for the "Peerless Vulcanizer" which made rubber handstamp devices, like the Wheel of Fortune killer, possible.



January 1, 1886, cover from Heilig's Mill (Rowan County) to Newton (Catawba County) with each of the postage stamps cancelled with the Wheel of Fortune killer, listed in Figure 5 as Type 0.

the Wheel of Fortune cancels. By November 2019, I had assembled sufficient information to publish a monograph on the Wheel of Fortune cancellations. Information about this monograph follows:

Here is where you can help... by providing any additional covers that I have not identified and forward photo scans of these covers to me at stonywoods840@gmail.com. All state towns and duplicates would also be appreciated. ■

References:

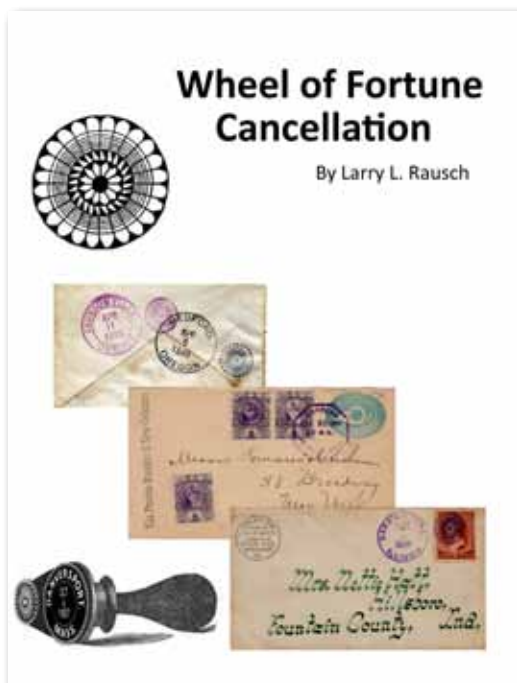
Cole, James M. *Cancellations and Killers of the Banknote Era 1870-1894*. (Columbus, OH: U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Inc., 1995).

Daniel F. Kelleher Auctions, sale no. 623, January 14, 2011, sale of Arthur Beane collection.

US Cancellation Club News, November 2005.

count		Town	Photo	Usage Range	type	County	Cover Date
1		NC Belvidere	P	1885	1	Perquimans co	85-02-20
		NC Belvidere	P	1885	1	Perquimans co	85-04-16
2		NC Clinton	P	1891	3	Sampson County	91-3-7
3		NC Dabney	P	1888	2	Vance County	88-4-5
4		NC Danbury				Stokes County	
5	A	NC Heiligs Mills	P	1886-8	0	Rowan County	86-1-1
	A	NC Heiligs Mills	P	1886-8	0	Rowan County	87-03-21
5	B	NC Heiligs Mills	P	1886-8	0	Rowan County	88-2-24
	B	NC Heiligs Mills	P	1886-8	0	Rowan County	xx-01-17
6		NC Little Sugar Loaf				Bladen County	
7		NC New Berne				Craven County	
8	A	NC Ormondsville	P	1885	1	Greene County	85-05-02
8	B	NC Ormondsville	P	1885	1	Greene County	85-07-28
9		NC Petra Mills	P	1887	1	Caldwell County	87-9-2
10		NC Tyner	P	1889	1	Chowan County	89-01-23

▲ Table 1. List of North Carolina post offices that used the Wheel of Fortune cancels.



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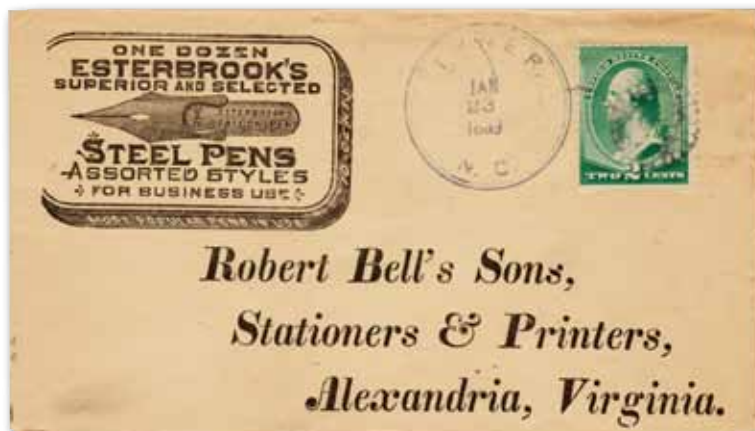
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Figure 7. ▶
March 7, 1891, envelope posted at Clinton (Sampson County) to Wilmington (New Hanover County) with town datestamp and Wheel of Fortune killer. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



◀ **Figures 8.** May 12, 1885, envelope from Ormondsville (Greene County) to Greensborough (Guilford County) with the "A" style town datestamp and the Wheel of Fortune killer. Note the datestamp includes the County name. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)

Figure 9. ▶
September 2, 1887, envelope posted at Petra Mills (Caldwell County) to Little River (Alexander County) with a beautiful example of the town datestamp and Wheel of Fortune killer. (Courtesy of Tony Crumbley)



◀ **Figures 10.** January 23, 1889, envelope from Tyner (Chowan County) to Alexandria, Virginia on a handsome advertisement cover with town datestamp and Wheel of Fortune killer.